

State of Assault: An Immersive Learning Experience

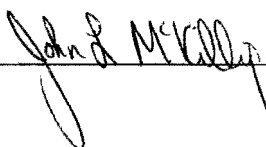
An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

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Thesis Advisor

Dr. John McKillip

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John S. McKillip", is positioned above a horizontal line.

**Ball State University
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Table of Contents	.24 2009	2
Abstract	.562	3
Acknowledgements		4
Author's Statement		5
Bibliography		14
Institutional Review Board		16
Human Subjects Application		17
Key Personnel		20
Narrative		22
Informed Consent		25
Recruitment Script		27
Interview Questions		28
Victim Interview Questions		29
Police Officer Questions		32
Victim Advocate Questions		33
Research Poster		34
Abstract		35
Background		36
Bibliography		40
Website		41
Home		42
Letter		43
Teams		44
Blog		45
Promo		55
Contact		56
Metafilm		57

Abstract:

In the United States, there is currently a backlog of over 250,000 sexual assault cases waiting to be analyzed in DNA crime laboratories. The delay in the analysis of DNA evidence causes delays in criminal prosecution and adds to the emotional trauma experienced by a victim of sexual assault. However, there are also communication problems that exist within the other sexual assault agencies. In order to investigate and potentially solve these problems, Dr. John McKillip and the Virginia B. Ball Center for Creative Inquiry worked with twelve students from a multitude of disciplines to create a documentary about the current state of the sexual assault casework process in Indiana.

The following is my account of the tasks I completed during the "State of Assault" seminar. These tasks were writing a Ball State University Institutional Review Board protocol, finding existing research on DNA backlog, helping create interview questions, designing a website, writing an abstract, background and bibliography for a research poster, and editing the metafilm. A copy of each item I worked on can be found at the end of my thesis.

Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank Dr. John McKillip for selecting me to participate in the immersive learning project "State of Assault." Thank you for advising me throughout the semester and for giving me multiple opportunities and challenges that not only taught me about myself, but also taught me about different methods of tackling obstacles. My semester would not have been the same without your challenges and advice.

I also want to thank the other members of the "State of Assault" team: Brittany Albertson, Jennifer Ball, Riley Fields, Cameron Kinzer, Kristin Larson, Zachary Perlinski, Kendra Phillips, Terri Regala, Cassie Scales, Amanda Smith, and Megan Smith. You are all a wonderful group of individuals who have great potential. I have learned so much from each of you, and I cannot wait to see what you will all do in the future.

In addition, I want to thank everyone who participated in the making of the documentary. To all of the law enforcement officials, forensic nurses, victim advocates, judiciary officials, and DNA specialists, I give you my gratitude for taking the time to teach the "State of Assault" team about all the positive and negative attributes in regard to the sexual assault system. Our documentary would have never come to fruition if you all had not taken the time to share your expertise.

Finally, I want to thank the two sexual assault victims that spoke to the team about their experiences. The two of you have experienced terrible events that have marked your lives forever. The courage that the both of you had to come to our team and talk about your experiences will not be forgotten, and you should know that you have made a difference. The two of you are an inspiration.

When I heard about the immersive learning project, "State of Assault," I was immediately interested in the topic that Dr. John McKillip proposed. He wanted to create a DVD documentary about the sexual assault casework process that was victim centered and focused on ways to improve the handling of sexual assault cases. Since my primary focus in college has been human sexuality and gender differences, I knew that this project would be a great opportunity to explore sexual assault in depth and to work in a hands-on environment that created a truly unique product.

Once the seminar began, I quickly realized that there was more to the project than met the eye. Our goal was to not only create a documentary, but we also were to market the documentary to several different audiences, to create a research poster about sexual assault, to build a website about the project, to design and prepare the final showcase, and to create a metafilm. However, before we could do this, the class had to learn about the sexual assault casework process, and we had to receive approval from the Institutional Review Board of Ball State University to proceed with interviews for our documentary.

To do this, the class broke off into three different teams, which consisted of the coordination team, the interview team, and the research team. The goal of each team was very different, but our end result was the same. We wanted to create quality products that informed the general public as well as professionals within sexual assault fields about the unmet emotional and physical needs of sexual assault survivors. The group I was placed into was research because I am a Sociology major with a background in research. Therefore, it was the responsibility of my team to do most of the background research, to obtain approval from the Ball State University Institutional

Review Board, to produce a research poster, and to design and maintain a class website. The amount of work that the research team was given seemed overwhelming, especially since I had also taken on the role of research team leader. However, I learned that everything could and would get done as long as we paced ourselves and set goals.

The first task the team took on was to obtain approval from the Ball State University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Megan and I decided to work on the approval, while the other two members of the group began to do preliminary research. Doing an IRB protocol was difficult for Megan and I. We had never done a project that put emotional risk on a subject before, and, therefore, we had never done a protocol before.

Overall, it took Megan and I about a week to write the entire protocol, which included our rationale, description and recruitment of subjects, methods and procedures of the study, plans for keeping the research confidential and anonymous, risks, benefits, and financial incentives for participants, and informed consent forms. In addition, we had to get every member of the class to complete a National Institutes of Health certificate, which indicated that each member was eligible and understood how to perform research on human subjects. Once we had finished the protocol, we turned it in. Luckily, we turned it in a day early because we found out that we had to make several revisions. Finally, after half a week of planning, a week of writing, and a week of waiting for the Ball State University IRB, we found out that we were exempt from further review since our proposal did not constitute 'research' as defined by the University. We could then proceed with all interviews.

After receiving exemption status, coordination and interview team began to plan for interviews by making contact with potential interviewees. However, it became crucial for the research team to find existing data on the sexual assault casework process so that the interview team would be informed on the subject and know what questions to ask interviewees. I lead the research team in the decision to split up the research since we needed to find information about law enforcement officials, forensic nurses, judiciary officials, DNA analysis and backlog, and unmet victim needs.

The section that I took charge of was DNA analysis and backlog, which was quite a step outside of my typical research. I found out a lot of information about the DNA backlog and the time it takes for analysis. However, it was shocking to find out that nationwide there were over 250,000 convicted offender specimens waiting to be analyzed, and that did not even include all the victim specimens awaiting analysis. It was clear that there was a problem with DNA backlog in the United States, but I also found out that the federal government was making opportunities available to rectify this problem by offering grants through the Department of Justice to help reduce DNA backlog. Individual states could apply for these grants, and as it turns out, Indiana was able to secure funding in 2007 to reduce the statewide DNA backlog to approximately a forty-day turn around rate for results on rape kit evidence and other evidentiary material. Indiana did this by paying to temporarily outsource laboratory analyses of evidence material to private crime laboratories, such as Strand Labs in Indianapolis. This information was included in our final documentary.

After the team compiled research for each topic, we met to discuss our findings and to help the interview team write questions for upcoming interviews. To begin, we

briefed the interview team on the topic they were going to cover in an interview. The interview team would then write questions they thought were relevant, and the research team would add in questions that we found specifically from our research. By working collaboratively, we were able to cover a wider range of ideas and concepts that might have been overlooked if we were working independently. In addition, we learned from the initial questions we wrote. After several interviews, both teams realized that we might be missing essential components that could be relevant to the documentary. So, once again, we worked together to create an even more comprehensive set of questions for each subject.

Once the interview team was off doing interviews with various subjects and the coordination team was planning interviews and the final showcase, the research team was free to work on the research poster and to create the class website. Our first order of business on both fronts was to decide how to begin each project. For the research poster, we decided to begin with the abstract because we wanted to submit the poster to the Washington D.C. conference "Posters on the Hill," sponsored by the Council of Undergraduate Research (CUR).

As far as the website was concerned, Kris, a member of the research team, wanted to make a website for the students. However, we also needed to make a website about the class that the public could view to find out information about the status of the project and creation of the documentary. This was a task that I initiated because I wanted to learn about making a website. In order to make the website, I needed to talk to the media director, Laura, about what could potentially be uploaded to the Virginia Ball Center server and what program I should use to build the website.

Initially, she suggested I use Dreamweaver, but after talking to several of the Telecommunications majors in the class, I realized that learning Dreamweaver would be extremely time consuming. So, I talked to Laura again, and this time she suggested I use iWeb, which is an Apple product that provides pre-made website layouts. I thought this was a great idea since I did not have a strong background in website design, and after a few trial runs, the website was up and running by the end of the sixth week. On the website, I included information about the class, a letter from Dr. McKillip about the project, a blog on how the class was progressing, and pictures that were taken throughout the seminar. Each week I updated the website so that anyone who wanted to know our progress on the project could read about what we had accomplished in the previous week and look at photographs so that they could understand our experience. As the class progressed, I also uploaded the promo of the documentary to the website, and for the final showcase, I added a tool where you could watch the documentary live if you could not make it to the showcase. However, the link to watch the documentary live did not work the night of the showcase, so it is no longer on the website. In addition, a current version of the website can be found at www.stateofassault.com.

In regard to the poster, as stated earlier, we decided to begin with the abstract. Megan and I took the lead on this piece, and later Kendra and Joe, the director of the Virginia Ball Center, helped us with final edits. The process of writing the abstract was a lot harder than I originally envisioned. Initially, I thought the abstract would take Megan and I about two weeks to write, and this included revisions. All I can say is that I completely misunderstood how important the abstract was since we were going to

submit it to “Posters on the Hill.” It took Megan and I nearly six weeks to complete the entire abstract with the help of Kendra and Joe. We went through nearly ten different abstracts that all had similar qualities but were in essence completely different. By week eleven, Megan and I finally had an abstract that we thought was worthy of the research poster and was ready to be submitted to “Posters on the Hill.” So, during week eleven, as the main author, I submitted the research poster abstract with Dr. McKillip and Joe to the CUR competition.

It was a huge relief to submit the abstract, but the team was very behind on the rest of the poster because we had also been transcribing interviews that the interview team had gone on. Transcription is typing out a word-for-word document of what was said during the interview with a time stamp, and it was up to everyone in the seminar to sit down and transcribe at least one interview. Over the course of several weeks, I transcribed two interviews. One interview was with a secondary sexual assault victim, and the second interview was with a victim advocate in Madison County.

When all of the transcripts had been recorded, the seminar students got together to discuss the layout for the final documentary. We argued for several days about the direction that we all thought the documentary should proceed. However, arguing got the team nowhere. After several days, the class as a whole decided that it would be best to decide on a general format and to let the editor, Riley, make decisions about editing. Then we could decide if we liked his choices for the documentary during weekly showings.

In total, we had three classroom showings of the documentary and one showing to outside viewers. At each of these showings, the class got the opportunity to talk

about the aspects of the documentary that they liked and the aspects they thought could be improved. Riley did a great job listening to all of our input, and he put together a documentary about sexual assault that many of us did not envision in the first few weeks of class.

Meanwhile, the research team went back to working on the research poster. We decided that it would be best to split up the remainder of the work since we had minimal time left in the semester. I assigned Megan to create a flowchart about the steps the class took throughout the semester, to find relevant pictures, and to design the PowerPoint slide that the poster would be printed from. I assigned Kris the role of the future trends and perspectives, and Kendra and I worked on the background and reference page for the poster. Megan quickly completed her design tasks, and Kris steadily worked on the future trends and perspectives section.

Kendra and I also worked diligently on our two sections, but soon realized that it would be hard to combine unmet physical and emotional needs of sexual assault victims into the background section, which had limited space on the poster. We wrote and revised our section about five times over the course of three weeks, and then we turned in our copy of the background to Dr. McKillip and Joe. They both approved our sections after a few minor changes, and we were done with the poster after Kris had her section approved about a week later. Probably one of the most important days for the research team was the day we went to get our poster printed and laminated. We had spent such a large portion of the semester doing research and working on different parts of the poster that it was exciting to see all of our hard work come to fruition.

Finally, Megan, Kendra, and I decided to take on one final task at the end of the semester. During the semester, each student was responsible for filming one week of the seminar so we could use the footage to create a short, five-minute film about the making of “State of Assault.” At the end of the semester, the class needed to put together this footage to create a metafilm about our experiences. Since the research team had finished with its tasks about a week before the showcase, we decided to take on the task of learning how to use Final Cut Pro and putting together the metafilm. We spent hours going over footage and documenting what we thought were important and/or pivotal moments in the class, and then we started putting together the metafilm. It was difficult to learn how to cut and put together clips in Final Cut Pro, but we learned how to make a basic film. We finished our metafilm just as the semester was ending, and Laura is set to put finishing touches on the metafilm so that the film can be presented to future investors in the Virginia Ball Center.

In the end, my experience at the Virginia Ball Center was one of the most challenging semesters I have ever had, but it was also the semester that brought me the most growth. Working with such a small group of talented individuals made me realize that we all have unique talents, and if we work together and use our talents in constructive ways, we can create something that is completely original. The documentary and research poster that the class produced have the potential to impact so many people through different venues. The research poster was accepted to “Posters on the Hill” in February, and Megan, Kendra, and I will be going out to Washington D.C. to present our findings. The poster was also on display during our final showcase, and it has been presented at several other research symposia. The

research poster has gone out into the research community to enlighten researchers on the sexual assault casework process, and it will, hopefully, influence other researchers to do more in-depth research on the unmet emotional and physical needs of sexual assault survivors.

The documentary, on the other hand, was displayed at the final showcase as well as during Women's Week at Ball State University and the Indiana Branch Meeting of the American Society for Microbiology in April. On the night of the showcase, it also aired on WIPB for the greater east-central Indiana community to see. Currently, the class is still working on trying to get the documentary on other public broadcast stations and in film festivals, including the Harvestmoon and Heartland festivals in Muncie and Indianapolis, respectively. The documentary was also submitted to several categories at the regional Emmys, and if it wins, there will be more recognition on our work and the topic, which can only lead to more viewings. I am truly proud to say that I was chosen to work on the "State of Assault" team, and I helped to create products that could go out into the public and make an impact on not only sexual assault victim's/survivor's lives, but also on the sexual assault casework process as a whole.

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Ball State University Institutional Review Board:

The first task that the research team completed was the protocol for the Ball State University Institutional Review Board. In this section, I have included the application for human subjects, the attachment to the human subjects form (key personnel), the narrative, the informed consent form, and the recruitment script.

HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH APPLICATION

Protocol title: Assisting Rape Victims through Forensic and Medical Casework (State of Assault)

Proposed project dates: begin: 09/22/08 end: 12/08/08

Principal Investigator: John McKillip E-mail: jlmckillip@bsu.edu

Department: Microbiology Telephone: (765) 287-0117

(check all that apply) ☒ Faculty/Staff ☐ Graduate student ☐ Undergraduate student ☐ Unaffiliated

(If the PI is a student researcher or not affiliated with Ball State University, a Faculty Sponsor must be listed below.)

Faculty Sponsor: _____ E-mail: _____

Department: _____ Telephone: _____

If this project is funded or if the investigator is seeking funding, list the agency(s) and/or sources.

(If the title of the grant application differs from the title of the IRB protocol, also specify the grant application title.)

Virginia B. Ball Foundation

To comply with the federally-mandated educational requirement, you (and all Key Personnel for this project – including the faculty advisor/sponsor) must have completed the online tutorial on the protection of human subjects. A copy of the computer-generated certificate indicating your successful completion of this tutorial must either be uploaded with this application or be on record in the Office of Academic Research and Sponsored Programs.

Have you and all Key Personnel completed this online tutorial?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Principal Investigator Assurance Statement

I have read and understand Ball State University's "Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research" as stated in the *Faculty and Professional Personnel Handbook*, and I agree:

- a) to accept responsibility for the scientific and ethical conduct of this research study,
- b) to obtain IRB approval prior to revising or altering the research protocol or the approved Informed Consent text, and
- c) to report immediately to the IRB any serious adverse events and/or unanticipated problems which occur as a result of this study.

The Principal Investigator must electronically sign this study prior to submitting the protocol to the IRB for review. When you sign this study as the Principal Investigator, you are also agreeing to the terms in the Principal Investigator Assurance Statement above.

Faculty Sponsor Assurance Statement

As the Faculty Sponsor for this study, I certify that I have reviewed this protocol and affirm the merit of this research project and the competency of the investigator(s) to conduct the project. My involvement in this study is as follows (check one option):

- ☐ I will be involved in this project. My name is listed and my responsibilities (described in the Key Personnel section) include supervision and oversight of this project.
- ☐ I will be involved in this project. My name is listed and my responsibilities (described in the Key Personnel section) in this project are limited (e.g., data analysis only). I affirm that this investigator has the competency to conduct this research study without my supervision or that of any other faculty or staff member of Ball State University.
- ☐ I will not be involved in any aspect of this project (including data collection). However, I have reviewed this protocol and the investigator's research experience and expertise. I affirm that this investigator has the competency to conduct this research study without my supervision or that of any other faculty or staff member of Ball State University.

A Faculty Sponsor must electronically sign this study for all student research projects and for all persons not affiliated with Ball State University before the protocol is submitted to the IRB for review. When you sign this study as the Faculty Sponsor, you are also agreeing to the terms in the Faculty Sponsor Assurance Statement above and accepting responsibility for ensuring that the terms of the Principal Investigator Assurance Statement are met.

Key Personnel

List all persons, other than the PI, who will have a role in the research project (refer to an attachment if necessary):

Name:	Brittany Albertson	Select one
Department:	Social Work	
Responsibilities:	Interviewing clients/patients, Recruitment, DVD production	
Name:	Jennifer Ball	Select one
Department:	Nursing	
Responsibilities:	Interviewing clients/patients, Recruitment, DVD production	
Name:	Mason (Riley) Fields	Select one
Department:	Telecommunications	
Responsibilities:	Interviewing clients/patients, Recruitment, DVD production	
Name:	Cameron Kinzer	Select one
Department:	Telecommunications	
Responsibilities:	Interviewing clients/patients, Recruitment, DVD production	

Subject Population

Check all categories that apply to the subjects:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitively impaired | <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant women |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minors (individual under age 18 years) | <input type="checkbox"/> Prisoners |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Normal healthy volunteers | <input type="checkbox"/> Students |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patients/clients | <input type="checkbox"/> Student athletes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, explain: _____ | |

Will information pertaining to the research be withheld from subjects (incomplete disclosure/deception)? ☐ Yes ☒ No
If yes, for what purpose? _____

List the location(s) where the research will be conducted: Madison County Indiana Sexual Assault Treatment
Center, Anderson, IN (Interview Room)

If advertisements will be used to recruit subjects, indicate the format(s) to be used:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Television (e.g., public access channel) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic media, describe: _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, describe: <u>N/A</u> | |

Collaborators and Permissions

If any part of the research is to be conducted at another institution with a collaborator, provide the following information for the research collaborator:

Name: Holly Renz
Title: Registered Nurse/Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE); Director
E-mail: holly.renz@ecommunity.com Telephone: (765) 622-2077
Address: 1309 Monticello Dr. Anderson, IN 46011

If any part of the research is to be conducted at an institution, or in conjunction with another organization, other than Ball State University, provide the name and contact information for a person who is authorized to give permission to conduct the research. Generally, this will be the person who would write a letter of permission to conduct the research.

Name: N/A
Title: _____
E-mail: _____ Telephone: _____
Address: _____

Key Personnel Continued: all personnel listed below are undergraduate students
(Virginia B. Ball Center for Creative Inquiry)

Name: Kristin Larson

Department: Psychology/ Women's Studies

Responsibilities: Research, Data analysis, DVD production

Name: Zachary Perlinski

Department: Telecommunications

Responsibilities: Interviewing clients/patients, Recruitment, Event planning, DVD production

Name: Kendra Phillips

Department: Nursing

Responsibilities: Recruitment, Event planning, DVD production

Name: Terri Regala

Department: Nursing

Responsibilities: Research, Data analysis, DVD production

Name: Cassie Scales

Department: Criminal Justice/ Psychology

Responsibilities: Recruitment, Event planning, DVD production

Name: Erin Slack

Department: Sociology

Responsibilities: Research, Data analysis, DVD production

Name: Amanda Smith

Department: Microbiology

Responsibilities: Recruitment, Event planning, DVD production

Name: Megan Smith

Department: Biology

Responsibilities: Research, Data Analysis, DVD production

Name: Brittany Alberson

Department: Women's Studies

Responsibilities: Interviewing

Name: Jennifer Ball

Department: Nursing

Responsibilities: Interviewing

Name: Mason (Riley) Fields

Department: Telecommunications
Responsibilities: Camera work

Name: Cameron Kinzer
Department: Telecommunications
Responsibilities: Camera work

Narrative:

Section 1

1.1 Assisting Rape Victims through Forensic and Medical Casework (State of Assault)-VBC Immersion Seminar

1.2 The purpose of this study is to address the barriers to the physical and emotional needs of sexual assault victims through the production of a DVD documentary.

1.3 This research is necessary to provide information on the problems and potential solutions that may have been overlooked or are unknown regarding the physical and emotional needs of sexual assault victims. Current problems in the criminal justice system include communication and cooperation issues among sexual assault nurses, law enforcement, forensic scientists, the judicial system, and all other departments dealing with sexual assault cases.

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) help to meet the emotional needs of the sexual assault victim by providing comprehensive professional care. However, SANE nurses are not readily available to all sexual assault victims because there are not enough SANE programs throughout the country. For example, there are only two SANE programs in Indiana. In addition, previous rape kits were not entirely comprehensive, and these kits have only recently been modified and are in the process of being remade and distributed to more accurately reflect needed evidence in modern casework.

In addition to the above areas, DNA evidence backlog is one of the major problems affecting sexual assault case processing because there are not enough forensic scientists to analyze biological evidentiary specimens, and not enough storage space for the growing number of rape victim assault cases.

Section 2

2.1 The approximate number of subjects for this study will be five to eight.

2.2 The participants of this study need to be female, over the age of eighteen, any ethnicity, and a sexual assault victim that has gone through or is going through prosecution of a sexual assault case. Participants also have to be willing to be filmed for the purpose of a DVD documentary; however, if the participant does not want her name to appear on the documentary, she may use a pseudonym. Only adult women will be selected for this study because women are more likely to be sexually assaulted than men. Statistics show that one in four women will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime, whereas only one in eight men will be sexually assaulted. Children will not be included in this study because they are less likely to report sexual assault. In addition, they will not be able to describe the experience as fully as an adult, and the victims' responses are critical to our study.

2.3 To be included in the study, a participant would need to be female, over the age of eighteen, any ethnicity, a sexual assault victim that has gone through or is going through prosecution of a sexual assault case, and willing to be filmed for a DVD documentary. Any subject that does not meet the above criteria would be excluded from the study. In addition, any subject that begins the study under false pretenses will be discontinued from the study. For example, the participant changed their age to be

included in the study or if the participant was dishonest about experiencing a sexual assault. Also, if the participant experienced extreme psychological trauma or distress while participating, then participation will be discontinued based on the investigator's discretion.

Section 3

3.1 Participants will be referred to the study based on a recommendation from a sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE). Next, any member of the recruitment team, which consists of Brittany Albertson, Jennifer Ball, Riley Fields, Cameron Kinzer, Zach Perlinski, Kendra Phillips, Cassie Scales, and Amanda Smith, will contact the potential participants through telephone or e-mail. No one on the recruitment team would have any previous contact or relationship with said potential participant. The recruitment team will only attempt to recruit potential participants twice, and will only contact the potential participant a second time if the potential participant wishes to have time to think about joining the study or cannot be reached on the first attempt.

Section 4

4.1 Those participating in the study will be interviewed at the Madison County Indiana Sexual Assault Treatment Center. After the participant has received the informed consent document and confirmed participation in the study, the interview will take place. The interview team consists of Brittany Albertson, Jennifer Ball, Riley Fields, Zach Perlinski, and Cameron Kinzer, and there will be only one member of the interview team conducting the interview. However, there will also be two members of the interview team present to film the participant's interview. Other interview team members will not be present at the interview to keep the number of people at the interview at a minimum. The interview will be one to two hours in duration. The research will last approximately twelve weeks and during this time follow-up interviews may be requested and will keep to the same procedure as the initial interview. If a follow-up interview is requested, the interview can take place at any time after the initial interview with the participant's permission.

Section 5

5.1 Data will be collected via the interview process. The data will be video recorded and transferred to a password-protected computer at the Virginia Ball Center with access to only those conducting the research. The data will be retained on the password-protected computer until December 31, 2008, at which point any clips not used in the documentary will be destroyed. The informed consent documents will be stored and locked in a file at the Virginia Ball Center until December 31, 2008, at which point the forms will be destroyed. If a participant indicates that a pseudonym will be used on the informed consent form, then the pseudonym will appear in the documentary instead of the participant's actual name.

Section 6

6.1 There is minimal psychological risk to the participants in the study. Possible risks are that reliving the experience might cause flashbacks or other emotional discomfort that may need to be resolved through counseling.

6.2 To minimize potential risks, participants will be warned about the possibilities of psychological risk through the informed consent. They will also be continually reminded throughout the interview that they may stop the interview or study at any time. We will provide information about counseling services on the informed consent form; however, the study will not pay for these services. If the participant becomes too emotionally distraught, the interviewer will immediately stop the interview, and if the participant is unable to continue, participation will be ceased with no prejudice toward the participant.

6.3 The potential benefits to the participant are that the participant will be given the opportunity to share her story, to help other sexual assault victims share their stories, and the possibility of being a catalyst for change in areas involving how physical and emotional needs of sexual assault victims are met.

Section 7

7.1 There will be no monetary incentive for participating in this study. The only potential incentive for a participant would be that she would be invited to the DVD documentary premier and would be included in the DVD documentary.

Section 8

8.1 The only foreseeable financial expense to the participant would be the potential cost of transportation to the Madison County Indiana Sexual Assault Treatment Center if the participant were not already a resident of the Center.

8.2 Not applicable

Section 9

9.1 To obtain informed consent from the participant, a member of the interview team (Brittany Albertson, Jennifer Ball, Riley Fields, Zachary Perlinski, Cameron Kinzer) would present the informed consent document to the participant. The member of the interview team would describe the nature of the document to the participant and would have the participant read the entire document. Then, the participant would be given the opportunity to ask any questions she has before signing the consent form. The member of the interview team would reiterate that the participant can leave the study at any time and would ask the participant to sign the consent form. If the participant wished to use a pseudonym, the participant would indicate her chosen name on the consent form at that time.

Informed Consent:**Assisting Rape Victims through Forensic and Medical Casework (State of Assault)**

The purpose of this research project is to address the barriers involving the physical and emotional needs of sexual assault victims by producing a DVD documentary that will provide a victim-centered approach to change. Findings from this research will spotlight the current problems involving assault cases and give suggestions as to how to resolve these issues, especially as they relate to improving methods to better meet the emotional needs of victims.

To be eligible to participate in this study, you must be over the age of eighteen, female, have gone through or are currently going through the sexual assault case process, and be willing to participate in a DVD documentary addressing this topic by offering information regarding your own experience.

For this project, you will be asked to participate in a videotaped interview regarding your personal experience with sexual assault as well as the assault case process. For example, you will need to be able to describe your experience with rape kit specimen acquisition, reporting of the assault, interaction with law enforcement, and criminal proceedings. You will be asked about aspects of the casework process in need of improvement to have better served your emotional needs. The interview will be one to two hours in duration and will be located at the Madison County Indiana Sexual Assault Treatment Center. The research will last approximately twelve weeks and during this time follow-up interviews may be requested and will keep to the same procedure as the initial interview.

For the purpose of the DVD documentary, with your permission, the interviews will be videotaped. A pseudonym will be allowed if requested. The videotapes will be transferred to a password-protected computer locked in a secure office at the Virginia Ball Center with access by only those conducting the research. The videotapes will be kept on file until the DVD is completed. Any clips not used in the documentary will be purged from the computer by December 31, 2008.

All data will be maintained as confidential and only available to research personnel until the DVD documentary airs on December 8, 2008. If you request to use a pseudonym, your pseudonym will appear on the documentary in place of your real name.

Anticipated risk may be that you do not feel comfortable answering some of the questions or questions may trigger psychological responses such as flashbacks to the assault. You may choose not to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable, and you may quit the study at any time, and if so, taped footage will be destroyed per your request.

Should you experience any feelings of anxiety, there are counseling services available to you through Still Waters Professional Counseling LLC at 2205 N. Wheeling Rd. Muncie, IN 47303, (765) 284-0043 or through Davidson Counseling Center at 1901 W. Royale Dr. Muncie, IN 47304, (765) 282-4317. However, use of these services will be at your own expense.

The benefits you may gain from participating in this study may include the opportunity to share your story, the potential to help other sexual assault victims to share their stories, and the possibility of being a catalyst for change in areas involving how physical and emotional needs of sexual assault victims are met.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw your participation at any time for any reason without penalty or prejudice from the investigator. Please feel free to ask any questions of the investigator before signing this form and at any time during the study.

For one's rights as a research subject, you may contact the following: Research Compliance, Office of Academic Research and Sponsored Programs, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306, (765) 285-5070, irb@bsu.edu.

I, _____ agree to participate in this research project entitled "Assisting Rape Victims through Forensic and Medical Casework (State of Assault)." I have had this study explained to me and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have read the description of this project and give my consent to participate. I understand that I will receive a copy of this informed consent for to keep for future reference.

To the best of my knowledge, I meet the inclusions/exclusion criteria for participation (described on the previous page) in this study.

Participant's Signature

Date

Pseudonym if applicable

Principal Investigator:

Dr. John L. McKillip, Associate Professor
Microbiology, CL 121
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306
Telephone: (765) 287-0117
Email: jlmckillip@bsu.edu

Recruitment Script:

Hi, my name is _____. I am calling on behalf of the Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry. I am working with a group of students from Ball State University, and we are currently developing a documentary DVD that will increase public awareness of issues and problems associated with sexual assault. Part of our study will come from a victim's perspective, and we were wondering whether you would be interested in telling a little bit about your experiences (good and bad) during the handling of your case by health care practitioners, law enforcement and other key personnel.

Interview Questions:

Each member of the research team conducted existing data research on a specific topic. Then, each team member shared the information with the research team as well as the interview team. In the following section, I have compiled three lists of interview questions that I specifically helped the interview team to write. The first list is a set of potential interview questions for a victim of sexual assault. The list is rather extensive because the interview team wanted to be able to pick and choose the questions that should be asked to the interviewee. A much shorter list was compiled for each individual victim interview by the interview team. In addition, there are also question lists for a police officer and a victim advocate.

Victim Interview Questions:

1. Please state your name.
2. Please tell me a little about yourself.
 - a. For example, age, education, work, family life
3. When did the attack happen?
4. Where did the attack happen?
5. Did you know the person who attacked you?
6. If yes, how did you know him/her?
7. Can you describe what happened during the attack?
8. What did you do immediately after the attack?
 - a. Were you aware of anywhere you could go for help after the attack?
 - b. Did you talk to anyone about the attack?
 - c. Did anyone encourage you to get an exam?
 - d. Where did you go after the attack?
9. Did you contact the police?
 - a. After how long did you decide to contact the police?
 - b. How long did it take the police to get to you?
 - c. Can you describe your experience with the police?
 - d. Did the police make any recommendations for what you should do?
 - i. Example: get an exam, take a family member/friend with you, escort you to the hospital or other facility
 - e. What was the gender of the police officer?
 - i. Were you comfortable with him/her?
10. After you decided to get an exam, where did you go?
11. Did anyone come with you to the facility?
12. How long did you have to wait to be seen?
13. Can you describe what you did while you waited to be seen?
14. Who performed your exam?
 - a. Were you comfortable with him/her?
 - b. Did he/she treat you with respect?
 - c. Did you feel your examiner was qualified to perform the exam?
15. Did you bring anyone to the exam?
16. Did the facility provide anyone to sit with you during the exam?
17. Describe the different steps of the exam.
18. Did any of the steps make you uncomfortable?
19. If certain steps made you uncomfortable, do you think they were necessary?
20. Did the examiner offer you any information about:
 - a. STD/STI testing
 - b. HIV testing
 - c. Pregnancy
 - d. Emergency contraception
 - e. A way to track your case/a contact person
21. Were you given any medications?
22. Did you know what all the medications were for?

- a. Was each medication explained to you?
- 23. Were you referred for more medical care?
 - a. Example: further injuries, pregnancy testing, STD/STI testing, HIV testing
- 24. Were you referred for any counseling?
- 25. Were you given any safety planning instructions?
- 26. Overall, how long did the exam take?
- 27. How did you feel at the end of the exam?
- 28. If you had already spoken to the police, did they contact you for further questioning?
 - a. If yes, please describe the process you went through when you talked to the police.
- 29. If you did not already contact the police, who initiated contact after the exam, if any?
- 30. Please describe what the police questioned you about.
- 31. Where were you questioned?
 - Was it a private location?
 - How many police officers questioned you?
- 32. What was/were the gender(s) of the police officer(s)?
- 33. Were you comfortable with the police officer(s) that questioned you?
 - a. Did you feel safe?
 - b. Did you feel like the police officer was sympathetic to your needs?
- 34. Did you feel accused of anything? Feel blamed for the assault?
- 35. At the end of the questioning, how did you feel?
- 36. How easy was it for you to find a prosecutor?
- 37. Did someone find a prosecutor for you?
- 38. Did you have to pay for the prosecutor?
 - a. If not, who (if you know) paid for the prosecutor's services?
- 39. How much time did you spend with your prosecutor?
 - a. Were the times you met the prosecutor convenient for you?
- 40. What did you talk to the prosecutor about when you met?
- 41. What was the gender of your prosecutor?
- 42. Were you comfortable with him/her?
- 43. Do you feel that he/she had your best interests in mind?
- 44. Did you feel like your prosecutor put together a strong case for your trial?
- 45. How long did it take for your case to go to court?
- 46. Did you feel like you got a speedy trial? (6th Amendment)
- 47. How did your trial go?
- 48. Did you have to see the assailant in court?
 - a. If yes, how did that make you feel?
- 49. Did you feel like anything went wrong during your trial?
- 50. What could have been improved to make your trial go even better?
- 51. Was your assailant convicted?
 - a. If yes, what was the sentence?
- 52. How did you feel at the end of the trial?

53. After the overall process, did you feel justice was served?
54. Do you have any suggestions for ways to improve any steps leading to prosecution?
 - a. Example: Improvements for exam, talking to police officers, talking/meeting with prosecutors, and actual prosecution
55. Did you tell anyone in your family?
56. How did your family react?
57. Did you tell any of your friends?
58. How did your friends react?
59. Did you tell anyone at work about the attack?
60. Were you superiors supportive to your needs throughout the process?
61. Did you feel safe at work?
 - a. If yes, how were your needs met to make you feel safe?
62. How did you feel about people who had experienced sexual assault before your attack?
 - a. How do you feel now?

Police Officer Questions:

1. Please state and spell your name.
2. How do you reassure victims of sexual assault so that they are willing to report and not feel blamed? (Do you feel revictimization by blame is a problem?)
3. What is the protocol for handling a sexual assault victim at the center? Is this different than other departments since you work in a separate facility?
4. Describe the process for reporting a sexual assault.
5. How do you meet the needs/emotional needs of a sexual assault victim?
6. What type of training have you received in dealing with a sexual assault victim?
7. When someone comes in to report a sexual assault, are you and Lisa always together? If she is not there or not available, what do you do?
8. As a woman, do you think it is easier for sexual assault victims to talk to you when reporting the assault?
9. What tools and resources do you need to better handle sexual assault cases?
10. How long have you been working at the center? How long have Lisa and you been a team?
 - a. Do you feel that working in a team is more effective than working separately?
11. How does your department define sexual assault? Rape? In your opinion, do other police departments use this same terminology?
12. About how many sexual assaults occur in Madison Co.?

Victim Advocate Questions:

1. Please state and spell your name.
2. Will you give a brief description of what a victim advocate is?
3. How did you make the decision to become a victim advocate?
4. What are the specific duties of a victim advocate in a sexual assault?
5. How do you emotionally help the sexual assault victim?
6. How is your role different than other agencies in meeting victim's needs?
7. What types of services (like counseling) do you offer a victim?
8. How do you help a victim restore control after a sexual assault?
9. What are the biggest rewards of your job? Challenges?
10. Describe how a victim advocate works with other agencies (police, SANE, court).
 - a. In your opinion, is this different than most other areas because you are on a team with a SANE and a police officer?
11. What would make it easier for you to help the victim emotionally?
12. What is a confidentiality policy in regard to adult victims and how does it impact working with other agencies?
 - a. Is there any information you must share with other agencies?
 - b. With this policy, can the victim feel confident in their confidentiality?
13. In your opinion, what is a victim's primary concern after a sexual assault?
14. In your opinion, what promotes a victim to go to counseling? What detracts a victim?
 - a. Do you notice a delay in the time of the assault to the time a victim goes to counseling?
15. In your experience, how often do victims go back to follow up exams and appointments?
16. Research shows that victims of sexual assault are likely to become victims again. What steps are done to prevent re-victimization?
17. How often do you go to trial with a victim?
18. How do you help a victim through the process of prosecution?
19. Is there anything that you need or could be done to better serve the victim of sexual assault?

Research Poster:

The research team created the research poster. The team decided to split the poster into sections so that each member could work on a part of the poster they would like to do. For the research poster, I worked with Megan to write the abstract. I also worked with Kendra to write the background, and I wrote the bibliography. Included are copies of the abstract, background, and bibliography.

Abstract:

Nationwide, the backlog of forensic evidence in sexual assault cases exceeds 250,000. This backlog delays prosecution and thus adds to the emotional trauma already experienced by the victim. In addition to this DNA backlog, numerous communication problems exist among law enforcement officials, forensic nurses, victim advocates, and judiciary officials during laboratory and criminal proceedings. To find solutions to these problems, a research team, involving students from seven different disciplines, devoted a full semester to studying the published research on sexual assault and then attempted to verify this research by videotaping interviews with sexual assault victims as well as experts in legal, medical and social services. The purpose of this cinematic research was to produce a documentary film that clearly defined problems commonly experienced by victims following a sexual assault as well as to explain how to: 1. improve the collection, testing, and storage of forensic evidence; 2. revise communication policies among agencies; and 3. meet the short and long term emotional needs of the victim. Research consultants for the project included the Indianapolis-Marion County Forensic Services Agency and the Madison County Sexual Assault Treatment Center. This project was funded by the Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry at Ball State University, and its research findings will be broadcast on public television, informing the general public about how to solve the problems that exist currently among agencies following a sexual assault.

Background:

Statistically, one in every four women will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime ("RAINN," 2008). The steps taken after an assault are time consuming and emotionally draining. Each step involved in sexual assault casework needs improvement to make certain re-victimization within the system does not occur. From the forensic examination to the prosecution of an offender, the victim needs a system that will professionally and compassionately handle the case.

Collecting deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA), the genetic material inside all human cells, is an important step in the sexual assault casework process because it enables the legal system to establish the identity of suspects and/or victims and verify whether a sexual assault has occurred ("President's DNA Initiative," n.d.). Ideally, DNA evidence should be collected from the crime scene or from a forensic examination. This evidence should be properly and temporarily stored, promptly transmitted to a well-staffed crime laboratory, and analyzed immediately. The results would then be used in criminal prosecution (National Institute of Justice, 2003). However, these steps are rarely followed with precision. Weaknesses within each agency can delay or prevent the use of DNA evidence in criminal prosecution (National Institute of Justice, 2003), and in so doing, harm the victim's emotional recovery as well as delay or preclude justice for the sexual assault victim.

DNA evidence should be collected for prosecution by a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE), a registered nurse with advanced training in forensic examination and emotional care of the sexual assault victim (Littel, 2001). The evidence a SANE nurse collects is vital to the prosecution of a sexual assault case because SANE nurses

can help link the victim and suspect to the crime scene, indicate sexual penetration or activity, and establish the victim's refusal to consent (Littel, 2001). One setback to criminal prosecution comes when a SANE nurse is not available to give a forensic examination. This leaves physicians and nurses within the emergency department to gather specimens, which can result in a failure to gather and/or document all available and needed forensic evidence (Littel, 2001). If such evidence is improperly collected and documented, the credentials of the emergency department personnel are challenged when testifying in a court of law.

Along with collecting physical evidence, a SANE nurse also treats the sexual assault victim for possible pregnancy and contraction of sexually transmitted infections (Payne, 2007). Nearly one in twenty sexual assault victims experience rape-related pregnancy (Payne, 2007). Therefore, it is imperative that women who have been sexually assaulted be treated with emergency contraception since the risk of potential pregnancy can hinder the recovery process. Additionally, sexual assault victims are at risk for contracting sexually transmitted infections (Magid et al., 2004). A SANE nurse can help a victim by providing antibiotic therapy for sexually transmitted infections such as HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). To better serve the emotional needs of a sexual assault victim, a SANE nurse partners with a victim advocate who works to protect the victim's rights and interests (Payne, 2007). A victim advocate will sit with a sexual assault victim during the forensic examination, help the victim through the prosecution process, and locate different avenues for recovery for the victim.

The first stage of DNA evidence collection requires collecting DNA evidence and meeting the victim's physical and emotional needs. However, once DNA evidence

leaves the SANE nurse, problems may occur when DNA evidence is improperly stored by law enforcement or crime laboratories. Furthermore, improper storage facilities and a lack of trained laboratory personnel contribute to the DNA evidentiary backlog and prolong the waiting periods for victims and their families. Most crime laboratories lack sufficient storage facilities to prevent degradation of biological evidence (National Institute of Justice, 2003; Pratt et al., 2006). Thus, most DNA evidence is routinely stored by local law enforcement (National Institute of Justice, 2003). However, most police departments also indicate that they lack adequate storage space for DNA evidence (Pratt et al., 2006). This dilemma may lead to certain evidence being compromised or discarded (Pratt et al., 2006). If the evidence is compromised or degraded, it will require additional or special forensic analysis methods lacking in most public crime laboratories, which are routinely underfunded (National Institute of Justice, 2003). In these cases, a public laboratory must outsource the case to a private laboratory, a time and cost prohibitive measure (National Institute of Justice, 2003).

Additionally, law enforcement agencies do not always submit DNA evidence to the crime laboratory because they do not believe the lab will accept or analyze the sample (National Institute of Justice, 2003). A failure to submit the DNA evidence causes an immediate delay for sexual assault cases, and it indicates that many police departments do not realize the impact DNA analysis can have on a case. Alternative problems that emerge and cause DNA backlog are a lack of personnel and equipment. Most state and local crime laboratories lack sufficient numbers of trained forensic scientists, a result of shrinking budgets and an insufficient pool of these professionals (National Institute of Justice, 2003). Although some crime laboratories lack basic

analysis equipment, most public crime laboratories lack a sufficient infrastructure that would speed DNA analyses and maximize staff resources. Many state and local crime laboratories lack basic information management systems, automated equipment, high throughput analyzers, and quality assurance software. Some of this equipment is commercially available, but state and local crime laboratories lack the funds to purchase it. In addition, many public crime laboratories have insufficient space to accommodate additional equipment (National Institute of Justice, 2003). Lack of proper evidence collection, storage, and analysis delays the use of DNA evidence in prosecution.

Finally, when DNA evidence is admissible in court, it is often misunderstood or omitted. Prosecutors, defense attorneys, and judges are not trained adequately to understand the complexity of DNA evidence. And many prosecutors do not know how to introduce DNA evidence in court. Additionally, judges do not know how to rule on the admissibility of DNA evidence in court (National Institute of Justice, 2003). This means that many sexual assault cases will be "he-said-she said" testimony, which creates reasonable doubt for many cases (Savini & Turvey, 2005). Therefore, all agencies within the sexual assault casework process need to understand the proper steps in handling DNA evidence and using it in prosecution to most effectively benefit the victim.

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Website:

The class website was created on iWeb and published through Fetch. I was the leader in this project, and the following are the pages of the website. I have not included the photograph albums in this section; however, the website can be found at www.stateofassault.com, and the photograph albums can be found there.

State of Assault

2008



Top Left: Hair combings are components of the Indiana rape kit that can undergo DNA analysis. Bottom Left: Zach Perlinski and Riley Fields watch Cameron Kinzer place his sample of DNA into agarose gel for electrophoresis. Right: Dr. McKillip explains how to place DNA samples into the agarose gel.

Welcome to the Virginia Ball Center!

Students majoring in Biology, Criminal Justice, Microbiology, Nursing, Psychology, Social Work, Sociology, Telecommunications and Women's Studies have come together with the Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry and Dr. John McKillip to address the current "State of Assault." We, as students, are immersing ourselves in a victim-centered perspective of the sexual assault casework process.

State of Assault Premier

The DVD documentary will premier on Monday, December 8, 2008 at 7:15 p.m. at the Ball State Alumni Center.

The premier is open to the public. Please come and join us for this exciting event.

Community Partners

- The Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry
- Ball State University
- Madison County Sexual Assault Treatment Center
- Indianapolis-Marion County Forensic Services Agency

One problem we are addressing stems from forensic evidence collection and processing. Backlog of biological evidence arises from the lack of storage facilities, materials and personnel in crime laboratories throughout the United States. This dilemma has led to a backlog of convicted offender specimens which exceeds 250,000 nationwide. The growing problem of evidence analysis and storage is but one facet of assault casework. Other aspects include immediate and ongoing care for the victim, as well as navigating the complex legal network.

We are interacting directly with Madison County Sexual Assault Treatment Center, Indianapolis-Marion County Forensic Services Agency, and other regional supporting agencies to address the evolving needs and rights of sexual assault victims. Field, laboratory, law enforcement and legal perspectives are being provided by experts in each discipline, essentially following the order that medical and forensic casework takes during the collection and processing of evidence. This interdisciplinary seminar will culminate in a marketable DVD documentary with interviews and hands on activities outlining the evolving needs and future trends in sexual assault case management. This includes but is not limited to novel laboratory technologies and rape kit protocol changes.

State of Assault: Letter

2008



Welcome to our Fall 2008 VBC class website, and to the Virginia B. Ball Center for Creative Inquiry at Ball State University! The diverse array of students you will read about have been selected to participate in this immersion experience because of their academic credentials and skill set, but also because of their leadership potential, desire to challenge themselves, and for their extraordinary passion and enthusiasm for the topic at hand.

Our objective is to develop a professional quality documentary DVD addressing the problems in meeting emotional needs of victims following a sexual assault. From the standpoint of law enforcement, forensic nursing personnel, and the victims themselves, problems in case work handling will be defined, and potential solutions identified that would improve the way in which the needs of a victim are met. The other problem addressed in our DVD is the physical problem of DNA evidence backlog that exists in most crime labs, and ways in which this backlog of evidence can be reduced or eliminated to better serve the victim's needs. Perspectives of laboratory personnel and nationally recognized DNA experts offer surprising insight into how this nationwide dilemma can be resolved, and how in some states, DNA evidence backlog has already been eliminated!

This semester is truly turning out to be an exercise in professional development. Students are learning about the technical aspects of filming interviews and site visits for our DVD production, but have also performed DNA fingerprinting in a microbiology laboratory, and are directly interacting with professionals in various sub-disciplines of criminology and forensics. All the while, students are networking, leading, and communicating in ways they never imagined before. In the end, the students will serve as hosts to a community forum and conference showcasing their efforts through seminars in a day-long colloquium at the BSU Alumni Center.

I hope you enjoy reading through our course site. Should you have any questions or need any additional information on our topic, please do not hesitate to contact me or the website designer.

John L. McKillip, Ph.D.
Associate Professor,
Microbiology
& 2008 VBC Fellow

State of Assault: Teams

2008



Coordination Team

Responsibilities:

- Set up interviews
- Prepare the final showcase for the DVD documentary
- Assist in the production of the DVD documentary

Left to Right: Terri Regala, Cassie Scales, Marici Smith, and Zach Perlinski

Interview Team

Responsibilities:

- Set up interviews
- Interview
- Film
- Assist in the production of the DVD documentary

Left to Right: Riley Fields, Brittany Albertson, Cameron Kinzer, and Jennifer Ball



Research Team

Responsibilities:

- Research for potential interviews
- Prepare a poster for the final showcase
- Maintain the class website
- Assist in the production of the DVD documentary

Top Row: Megan Smith and Erin Slack

Bottom Row: Kendra Phillips and Kris Larson

State of Assault

2008



Left: The interview team prepares for an interview with Kristina Crouch.

THE FIRST 6 WEEKS

10/3/08

The first month has been quite a whirlwind. The time is flying by and before we know it, it will be showcase night. Truly an interdisciplinary seminar, each member of this semester's Virginia Ball Center team is working hard to make this documentary a success.

Week one consisted of an introduction to immersion learning, filling out the necessary forms, preparation to handle the available technology, as well as watching some previous VBC metafilm footage. Dr. Kaminsky from the Institutional Review Board spoke with the group about dealing with human subjects, and a rape kit was studied and introduced for the first time. The group was also divided into three teams during the first week of the seminar. The three teams, research, interview, and coordination were given specific responsibilities for the semester.

Our first site visit occurred during the second week of the seminar with a visit to the Madison County Sexual Assault Treatment Center. Also, discussion of the leadership book that was passed out during week one continued throughout week two. As we began to become even more immersed in the topic, Dr. Ellen Lucas from the BSU Counseling Center spoke with the group to talk about the services the center offer.

Week three consisted of leadership and article discussion, team group work, an introduction to DNA, as well as a visit to Cooper Science Complex to speak with Pamela Jahnke, a SANE-A.

Week four began the interviews, starting with Sgt. Rodney Frasier, Julie Rosser, and Chief Jowitt.

Week five consisted of more team time, further information on DNA, a DNA fingerprinting lab, interview critiquing with Laura O'Hara, and finally an interview with Megan Brown.

Week six was full of interviews consisting of a detective, a secondary victim, a victim's advocate, and a forensic scientist.

Today, day five of week six, the website is up and running! Teams are still hard at work scheduling and conducting interviews, planning the showcase, researching background information on the subject, and much more. The coming months will most likely hold a mix of stress, excitement, frustration, and anticipation. With such a talented group of individuals, the possibilities for success are numerous. It has been a rewarding experience so far, and we can't wait to see what the future holds!

[< Previous](#)

[Next >](#)

State of Assault: Blog

2008



The class has a carry-in lunch with Dr. Gary Schultz on Friday, October 10, 2008.

WEEK SEVEN UPDATE

10/12/08

During week seven, a lot of small tasks were taken care of. On Monday, the class had a group breakfast where everyone pitched in and worked as a team. After the breakfast, Dr. McKillip had a meeting with the class about storyboarding the film. (We have to continually storyboard to make sure **we** are on the right track). Then, we broke off into our teams to continue to work on individual group projects.

For the rest of the week, the class continued to work on individual projects. Research team wrote the background section for the final poster, did revisions on the abstract, and helped interview team to write questions for upcoming interviews. In addition, Kris helped to find our first victim!

Coordination team finalized centerpieces for the final showcase and got more money for the showcase budget. They also scouted locations for B-roll footage (film footage that is shown when people are talking) and contacted Holly Renz about potential victims.

Finally, interview team wrote questions specific to different interviews and went to interviews with Holly Renz and Dr. Gary Schultz. Holly Renz is a SANE nurse who specializes in sexual assault, and Dr. Schultz specializes in psychotraumatology.

[< Previous](#)[Next >](#)

State of Assault: Blog

2008



Brittany Albertson interviews Detective Bruce Smith, a sexual assault detective from Indianapolis Metro Police Department.

WEEK EIGHT UPDATE

10/21/08

This week we had our first victim interview! We also had interviews with Detective Smith who is an Indiana Police Department Sex Crime Investigator, Diane Frye, a prosecutor in Muncie, IN, and Pam Jahnke, a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Coordinator for Center of Hope.

Terri from the Coordination Team continued to schedule interviews with a victim advocate, police officer, and SANE nurse, and Jennifer got an interview with the prosecutor for Madison County.

Finally, Coordination Team continued to work on the invitations for the final showcase, and Research Team worked with Joe, the director of the VBC, to create another version of the abstract that could potentially be submitted to the Washington D.C. 'Posters on the Hill.'

[< Previous](#)[Next >](#)

State of Assault: Blog

2008



James Nave is interviewed by Jennifer in the courtroom.

WEEK NINE UPDATE

10/27/08

We had our last round of interviews this week. On Monday, the interview team went out to Anderson and interviewed Lisa Connors and Michelle Steel from the Madison County Sexual Assault Treatment Center. Lisa is a victim advocate in the center, and Michelle is a police officer. The two women are part of a unique team within Madison County, and they are one of only four teams in the country. Also, on Monday, the class got together and started to storyboard the documentary where we came up with the introduction to the film.

On Tuesday the interview team met Kelly Estes who is a SANE nurse (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) at Ball Memorial Hospital. She told the interview team about starting a SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) at Ball Memorial, and she let us know what the hospital needs to better serve sexual assault patients. In addition, the class had a meeting with Dr. McKillip about where the story was going and our plan for putting the story together.

Wednesday led the team to its last interview with James Nave, a high level prosecutor in Madison County. He helped us to understand how the prosecutor's office determines which cases will get filed and sent to court. He also emphasized that the state files the charges against the accused, not the victim. (A victim can only file a civil suit against the accused). This is a misconception in the way many people think about the casework process.

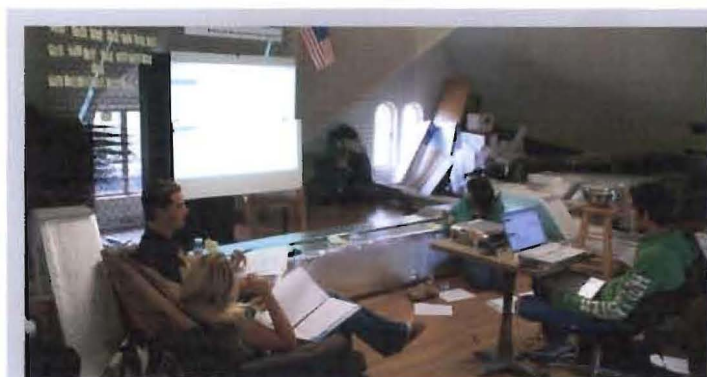
Finally, the rest of the team was hard at work trying to log (writing down a word-for-word account of an interview) the previous interviews of week eight and keep up-to-date on week nine's interviews so the class could begin to storyboard the documentary in week ten.

[< Previous](#)

[Next >](#)

State of Assault: Blog

2008



The group displays the story in two different ways. We use a projector so that everyone can see, and we use post-it notes when we finalize a section.

WEEK TEN UPDATE

11/3/08

This week the class focused on storyboarding the documentary. We began by figuring out specific lines for the introduction on Monday, and then we planned to discuss the role of the police in the sexual assault casework process.

On Tuesday, we continued to storyboard the police section, but we quickly realized that planning the story word-for-word was not a good idea. Laura, the media director at the center, came to direct our efforts in a more realistic way. She taught us to storyboard by concept instead of by line, which helped us to see the big picture or skeleton of where the documentary was going.

Wednesday brought about a change of pace, and the class went to the Anderson County Circuit Court to watch a sexual assault trial. However, there was a technical difficulty, and the court had to reconvene the next day.

Thursday we could not return to the court case because we needed to focus on storyboarding again. We spent the entire day focusing on the story that we wanted to tell, and by the end of the day, we had our documentary planned out.

To celebrate our successful storyboarding, the class went back to court on Friday to witness part of the trial, and we got to see Holly Renz, a SANE nurse and previous interview subject, testify about the forensic evidence she collected.

[< Previous](#)

[Next >](#)

State of Assault: Blog

2008



Dr. McKillip and his wife, Sarah, are making dinner for the class.

WEEK ELEVEN UPDATE

11/11/08

This week each group went back to working on individual assignments. Research team continued to work on the poster for the final showcase. On Monday, the team decided to split up the workload so that we could get each section finalized by the end of November. In addition to working on the poster, the group took on metafilm duties to get footage of everyone working. Finally, Erin, along with Dr. McKillip and Joe Trimmer, submitted the poster abstract to 'Posters on the Hill.'

Coordination team was busy at work scheduling times with Holly Renz and Detective Smith to get B-roll footage. Mandi also set up an interview with "Ann," a sexual assault survivor. Finally, Zach finished the invitations and sent them to be printed.

Interview team was busy editing the documentary, and they also finished the promo for the documentary.

In addition to our individual work, the group got together at Dr. McKillip's house on Friday for an evening of fun.

[< Previous](#)

[Next >](#)

State of Assault: Blogs

2008



WEEK TWELVE UPDATE

11/18/08

This week Riley worked hard to edit together a rough cut of the film, which he showed the class on Wednesday. After the showing, the class discussed what we could change to improve the documentary as well as possible options for B-roll footage. Also, Cameron completed the lower thirds to introduce new characters in the film.

Meanwhile, the research team continued to work on the poster. Megan finished the middle section of the poster which includes a flow chart for how we made the documentary and pictures from the semester. Kendra and Erin put together their first draft of the background, and Kris worked on the broad impact statement.

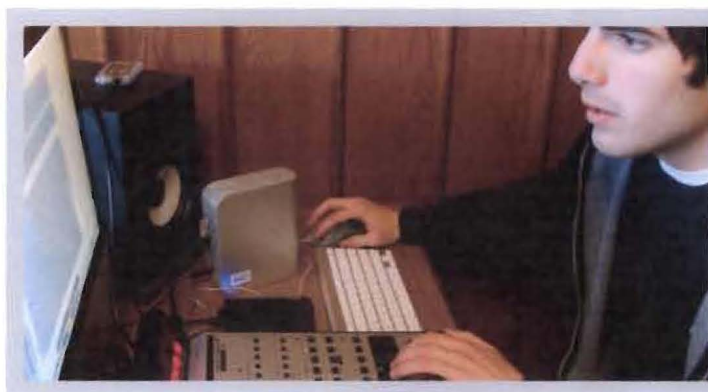
Coordination team had to have more invites printed this week because there were some problems with the original printing. However, those issues were worked out, and the invitations will be mailed soon.

Finally, on Thursday, the group had lunch with Jud Fischer, executor of the Ball Brothers Foundation, and the group took the fifteen-second promo to WIPB.

[< Previous](#)[Next >](#)

State of Assault: Blog

2008



Cameron works on placing the music into the documentary.

WEEK THIRTEEN UPDATE

11/24/08

Last week the class accomplished a lot of small tasks. On Monday, we put together the invites and mailed them to all of our guests. Cameron and Riley also filmed part of the opening sequence for the documentary.

On Tuesday, Cameron and Zach went to the Madison County Sexual Assault Treatment Center and filmed Holly Renz working for B-roll footage.

Wednesday was the second showing of the documentary, and we talked about cutting certain parts of the film. We also discussed how to make better transitions during the film. Cameron started to create a musical score for the documentary with two Ball State musicians, and Brittany helped Riley in the editing process by watching B-roll for different parts of the documentary.

On Thursday, the class went back to separate tasks. Riley edited while Brittany watched B-roll. Cameron worked with the musicians. Mandi captured the metafilm. Megan put together a layout for the research poster, and Erin and Kendra finished the background.

Finally, on Friday, Zach presented to the class a new design for the program, which he worked on over the weekend.

[< Previous](#)[Next >](#)

State of Assault: Blog

2008



Part of the class on the day of the showcase.

THE LAST 3 WEEKS

12/22/08

The last three weeks of the seminar went by very quickly.

Week fourteen was once again a week for small tasks. Riley and Cameron continued to work on various parts of the film, and the music for the documentary was finished.

The coordination team continued to finalize plans for the final showcase by planning what time we would need to arrive to decorate and what we would need to do on the days leading up to the final showcase. Zach finished his new program design, and he had the programs printed.

Research team continued to diligently work on the poster, and we finalized the design and text during week fourteen.

In week fifteen, the class finalized everything for the final showcase. On Tuesday, December 2, 2008, Riley finished editing the documentary, and Cameron began working on final corrections in color, graphics, and sound, which he finished by the end of the week.

Coordination team worked to get all the posters for the final showcase finished and printed, and they put together all the programs. The research team also had the research poster printed.

Finally, week sixteen arrived. On December 8, 2008, we had our final showcase. The morning was spent anxiously awaiting the time we could head over to the Alumni Center to begin preparing for the showcase. By noon, we were able to go over to the Alumni Center, and we put up all of our decorations in two hours. We had over 18,000 bags that we needed to open and set up around the event area. The plan was to show just how many clothing bags were needed for sexual assault evidence in one county in Indiana.

Then, once we finished setting everything up, the class had a few hours to relax before the event. At 6:00 p.m., we all met at the Alumni Center to prepare for our guests who started arriving around 6:15. We mingled with the guests and showed them some of our displays before directing them into the main event area.

Around 7:00 p.m. the main event began. Dr. McKillip opened the evening with a short speech, and then we played the documentary. Directly after the documentary, certain members of the class were given the opportunity to speak about their experiences with the class and the topic. After these speeches, there was a brief question and answer period where members of the audience got to ask specific question about the documentary and/or class.

Finally, at the end of the showcase, guests were given bags to fill with items to donate to the local domestic violence shelter or the Madison County Sexual Assault Treatment Center. The night was a huge success, and we had over 200 people at the showcase!

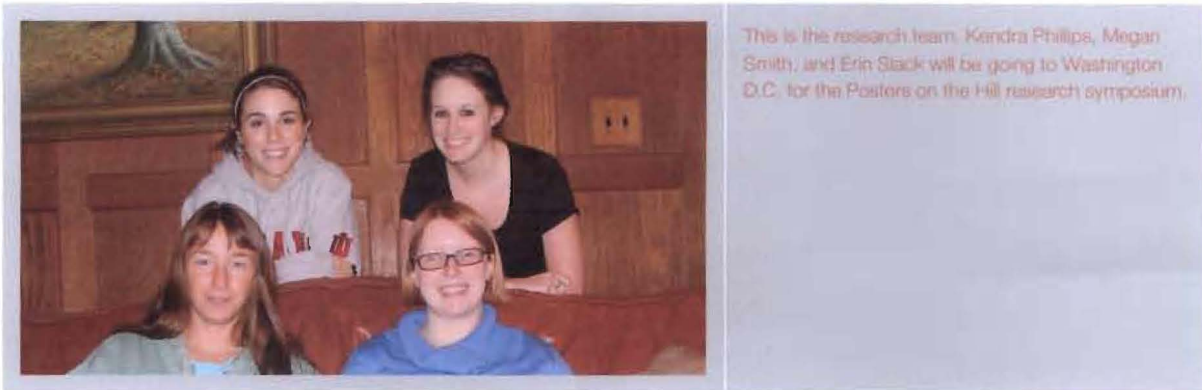
The rest of the week at the Virginia Ball Center was spent debriefing and preparing the meta-film. Megan, Kendra and Erin put the meta-film together for Laura to finish editing. We also spent the last week checking in all of the equipment we used.

[< Previous](#)

[Next >](#)

State of Assault: Blog

2009



POSTERS ON THE HILL UPDATE

2/23/09

On February 18, 2009, the research team found out that its research poster was accepted to Posters on the Hill. The team will be going to Washington D.C. to attend the conference on May 5, 2009.

The State of Assault research poster and one other poster submission from Ball State University were the only two posters that got into the symposium from Indiana.

[< Previous](#)[Next >](#)

State of Assault: Promo

2008

**Promo:**

This is the promo for the documentary which will premier on WIPB on December 8, 2008, at 11:00 p.m.

State of Assault: Contact Us

2008

To contact the team with any questions or comments about the class, please e-mail Erin Slack at ekslack@bsu.edu.



Bottom Row: Cassie Scales, Megan Smith, Mandi Smith, Jennifer Ball
Middle Row: Kris Larson, Kendra Phillips, Erin Slack, Brittany Albertson, Terri Regala
Top Row: Dr. John McKillip, Zach Perlinski, Riley Fields, Cameron Kinzer

Metafilm:

The role of the metafilm is to show how the documentary was made. Kendra, Megan, and I worked on the metafilm during the last two weeks of the semester. In the back pocket of this binder is a copy of the metafilm.